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METHODISM IN NORTH AFRICA AND EUROPE

REPORT OF THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY, A. B. LEONARD, D.D., LL.D., TO THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

MISSION ROOMS
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March 16, 1910, I sailed from New York for Algiers, Africa. At the Madeira Islands, just off the city of Funchal, the good ship Celtic anchored March 24, where she remained for eight hours, giving time to go ashore and look into our mission work in that city, which is splendidly located on a mountain-side sloping down to the sea. I was met on board ship by our missionaries, Brothers Smart and Ninde. The city has a population of about 50,000. Our mission house is situated in the central part of the city, fronting on a public garden, which is beautifully adorned. The mission house has twenty-four rooms, affording accommodations for church services, missionary's residence, school, and Seamen's Rest. At 3 P. M. a numerously attended special service was held in the chapel, giving an opportunity to form some idea of the class of people we are reaching. They were intelligent and appreciative.

The Madeira Islands furnish an excellent health resort for our missionaries on the west coast of Africa. Besides Funchal there are two other mission centers in the island, but too far away to be visited, which I very much regretted.

Algiers

On the morning of March 30 I landed at Algiers, North Africa. The city is built on a hillside and the streets are winding. The houses rise above each other terrace-fashion, giving the city from the deck of the ship a splendid setting. Algeria is a part of the French republic. The provinces are Oran, Algiers, and Constantine. Each has two representatives in the Chamber of Deputies at Paris. Immediately after the Franco-Prussian war a large number of French people living in Alsace and Lorraine, the French provinces that were taken by Germany, immigrated to Algeria. These French provinces in North Africa contain as fine farming land as can be found anywhere. The climate is mild, so that there can be produced crops of various kinds of cereals, vegetables, etc., throughout the year. In this vast territory there are probably 4,500,000 inhabitants. The French republic boasts of its liberty; it would not be correct to say religious liberty, for it professes to know nothing about religion. The Roman Catholic Church is there, and so are the Mohammedans; but neither has

recognition by the State. France affords no protection to any religion as such. No religion of any kind can be taught in the schools. Here is a babel of tongues. The French language is dominant in business and social life, but various other languages are heard. The Kabyle, Moorish, Italian, Arabic, and English are all spoken.

It was my privilege to be present at the organization of the Quarterly Conference, presided over by Superintendent E. F. Frease. After the business of the Quarterly Conference was completed the Mission entered upon its first session April 1, 1910. The first business transacted was to recommend three missionaries to home Conferences for election to deacon's and elder's orders. The names of these missionaries were cabled to the respective Conferences, where they were received on trial and duly elected.

There are three centers in the Mission: Algiers, with 180,000 inhabitants; Constantine, 300 miles to the southeast, with 80,000 inhabitants; and Tunis, 300 miles further east, with a population of approximately 150,000. The Mission in North Africa is remarkable for its linguistic ability. The twenty Christian workers speak from two to five languages each. On a social occasion hymns were sung in English, Spanish, French, German, Arabic, and Kabyle. The territory to be occupied stretches along the Mediterranean from Algiers to Tunis, a distance of about 600 miles, and extends inland indefinitely. In that new mission we are facing a tremendous problem, but it is believed that it is not impossible of solution. We are greatly handicapped for want of proper facilities for carrying forward our work. We do not own a foot of real estate nor a building. What is needed more than all else is the erection of suitable mission buildings in the three great centers named, for which at least a sum of $150,000 is necessary.

Bulgaria

Since freeing herself from the galling Turkish yoke which Bulgaria had worn so long she is aspiring to a larger place in Balkan and European politics. Her capital city, Sophia, is growing rapidly, and now has a population of 100,000. The streets are being paved. An excellent electric street-car service has been installed. In some parts of the country modern agricultural implements are in use, and the old indescribable tools are being discarded. The territory is about equally divided by the Balkans, a range of mountains running nearly east and west, while the country as a whole is at once beautiful and fertile. Special attention is being given to a free public school system, and school facilities of excellent quality are being provided.

In Tirnova, the ancient capital of the country, are two splendid gymnasiums, one for boys and one for girls, erected by the government at a cost of $200,000, with a total attendance of about 1,800. Parents who are able to do so are required to pay a small fee, while the children of the poor are not only admitted free but are furnished one meal a

day without cost. There is already a strong movement in favor of separation between Church and State. The Greek Orthodox Church is a State institution and is supported from the public treasury. Disestablishment in France is powerfully influencing Bulgaria, and it is not improbable that separation of Church and State may come in the near future. Meanwhile the Holy Scriptures are being widely circulated. During a period of three months previous to my visit about 20,000 copies of the New Testament were sold.

The Bulgaria Conference met at Tirnova April 21. During recent years there has been a slow but encouraging growth. There are seventeen ministers, and the communicants number 662, a gain during the past year of 60. Sunday school scholars number 755. The session of the Conference attracted the attention of the people very widely. The church edifice, which seats 200, was inadequate to accommodate the people. The aisles and an adjoining lecture room were crowded and many were unable to gain admission. Several priests of the Greek Church attended the devotional services and business sessions of the Conference, and some of them gave expression to their deep interest in what they saw and heard. Bulgaria is apparently at the dawn of a better day politically and religiously than she has ever heretofore enjoyed.

On my way from Bulgaria I stopped at

Buda-Pesth

the capital of Hungary, which has a population of 800,000 and is splendidly situated on both sides of the Danube. Eight years ago the Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in Hungary, and we now have eight pastoral charges, constituting a district of the North Germany Conference. Four years ago our work was opened in Buda-Pesth, where we now have two congregations, one German and one Hungarian. It was my privilege to preach on a week day evening at a joint service of the two congregations, and I was interpreted into German by Pastor Melle. The Hungarian pastor took notes and announced that on the following Monday evening he would give his people the substance of the sermon for the accommodation of his people who did not understand German. Hungary enjoys religious liberty, though there are several State Churches, viz., Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Hebrew. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest, richest, and most influential. The bishops hold vast tracts of land, for which the peasantry pay exorbitant rentals. They also own immense properties in the cities and towns, from which they derive large revenues. I spent a Sabbath at

Vienna

the capital of Austria, which has a population of 2,000,000, and is indeed a splendid city. It is built on both sides of the Danube, which separates it into two unequal parts. It is generously provided with

parks and open spaces which are beautifully ornamented with a great variety of trees and a profusion of flowers. Here is St. Stephen's Church, of pure Gothic architecture, founded in the fifteenth century, and the greatest in Austria. I spent an hour in its spacious auditorium and its numerous side chapels. Near the great altar is a picture of the Virgin garlanded with flowers, before which an ever-changing company of worshipers were bowed and many candles flamed. Many kissed the glass plate that covered the picture, and crossing themselves went their way. There were maidens praying that they might find husbands, young men that they might find wives, and husbands and wives were praying that they might be blessed with children. Looking upon these devout misled worshipers I could not suppress the question, If this is not idolatry what is it?

Methodism was founded in Vienna forty years ago by the English Wesleyans and was taken over by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1897. Baroness von Langeneau in the same year gave a fine building to our Church, which is eligibly located. It provides for fifteen deaconesses, a commodious chapel for church services, and several apartments which are rented and bring in a considerable income. Our Church in Austria is greatly retarded by illiberal laws. Only churches recognized by the State can legally hold public religious services. Churches so recognized are the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, and Mohammedan. Since the provinces of Herzegovina and Bosnia, which are largely Mohammedan, were forcibly separated from Turkey and annexed to Austria the Mohammedan religion is recognized as the equal in the legal sense of the other churches named. The law allows other religious services to be held by families only, behind closed doors. We have now three Methodist Episcopal churches in Vienna, and according to the letter of the law our services are illegal. Complaint has been made by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who demand that our services be prohibited. Up to the time of my visit no decision had been made. Our people claim that they do not violate the spirit of the law, for the reason that the congregations are made up of a union of families and consist of only specially invited worshipers. On the doors of our places of worship is inscribed, "Only invited persons can enter." But they let it be known that everybody is invited. It is a difficult thing to get out of a State Church. One desiring so to do must put himself on record as withdrawing from the State Church, after which he is classed with persons who have no religion. The only easy way to get out of the State Church is to die, and even after death Roman Catholic priests claim to control the destiny of the people.

Sabbath, May 1st, I preached in our First Church, Vienna, to a congregation that filled our commodious chapel. At the close of the sermon the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated. Nearly every person present participated, and a more impressive communion service it has not been my privilege to witness.

Rome and the Italy Conference

On my way from North Africa to my first European Conference I spent three days in Rome, just at the time when the excitement growing out of the Fairbanks-Roosevelt incidents was at its highest. It is not necessary to go into details here concerning these incidents, as they have been amply reported through the secular and religious press. It ought to be said, however, that these incidents have brought the Methodist Episcopal Church in Italy under the limelight, and have given it a position not heretofore occupied. The charges that have been made against our work in Italy are absolutely without foundation. The absurd ravings of Archbishop Ireland concerning our work and methods can deceive only people who lack information as to the facts in the case. It must be remembered that a large number of the people of Italy are thoroughly and forever alienated from the Roman Catholic Church, and that reconciliation is impossible. The Vatican may continue to tearfully proclaim its affection for its dear children in Italy, but they only sneer at its pretensions. As an illustration of public sentiment in Rome toward the Vatican it is only necessary to call attention to the great demonstration made Feb. 17, 1910, commemorating the martyrdom of Giordano Bruno, when 50,000 people marched the streets of the city displaying banners inscribed, "Down with Hierarchy," "Down with the Vatican," "Down with the Pope," and others of like import. The monument that marks the spot where Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake by order of the Pope stands as a silent but tremendous protest against the whole Vatican system which is the same in spirit now that it was then. That the Vatican has arrayed itself against the King of Italy the whole world knows. It is also true that the masses of the people are with the King and in favor of the unity of Italy. The Pope may continue to regard himself as a prisoner and to long for the time when he shall have a kingdom all his own, but the Italian people have decided that the temporal power of the papacy is a thing of the past. The breach between the Vatican and the people grows wider every year and will never be closed. The Fairbanks-Roosevelt incidents have emphasized this breach, which has now become an impassable chasm. Unless Protestantism comes to the rescue of the Italians they will become a nation of materialists and atheists. At present the serious minded people who have not given up their faith in God, although they have lost faith in the Roman hierarchy, are turning to the Methodist Episcopal Church as the leading evangelistic force of the country. That the Vatican guns are now turned upon us only serves to strengthen our position. It seems to have been a special Providence that directed the planting of our church in Italy in 1873, that it might have time to take root and be prepared for the struggle that has recently been precipitated. If Methodism is driven from Italy or fails to gird itself for the battle now on, the cause of evangelical Christianity will be set back by decades.

The Italy Conference met in Florence, which has a population of 200,000, May 4-9, 1910. The membership of the Conference numbers 35 effective Italian ministers and 3 Americans—a total of 38. The statistics show the whole membership, including probationers, to be 4,036, which is a gain of 231 over the previous year. The growth in membership of our church in Italy is slow but it moves steadily on.

French Mission

Our Mission in France was established in 1907. It held its third annual meeting in Lyon, May 12-15, and proceeded at once to organize itself into a mission Conference under the enabling act adopted by the General Conference in 1908. The whole membership, including probationers, numbers 121, Sunday school scholars 61. The territory at present occupied lies in the southeast and southern part of France. We have not entered any place occupied by the Wesleyans. It must be admitted that the Wesleyan Methodist Church in France has not been aggressive. It has been at work for fifty years, and it has a membership of only 1,500. The president of their Conference came to our Conference as a fraternal messenger and brought brotherly greetings and a hearty welcome. The principal points occupied up to date by our preachers are Chambery, Grenoble, Lyon, Ville Franche, Toulon. In all we have twelve regular preaching places, and under our circuit system could easily occupy as many more were the needed facilities available. What is needed just now is a theological training school to prepare young men for our ministry. We have come to recognize the necessity of theological schools in America and should be deeply impressed with their greater need in Roman Catholic Europe. Young men who have been reared under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, and have its teachings woven into the warp and woof of their intellectual and moral makeup, need not only spiritual regeneration but also biblical instruction on all moral and religious questions. The question is sometimes raised, Why plant missions in France? Is not France a Christian nation? Yes, and No, with the emphasis on No. France is religiously stranded and is in danger of spiritual shipwreck. The people, weary of being offered a stone when they needed bread, have on a tremendous scale repudiated the Roman Catholic Church, and those who have not become atheists and materialists have largely ceased to be in any true sense religious. Breaking away from the Papal Church, France is also departing more widely from Christian morality and rushing after material wealth and worldly pleasure. That the political life of France has taken its everlasting departure from the Roman Church does not admit of doubt. Every election day gives additional emphasis to that fact. The church is being wiped off the political slate on a wide scale. Roman Catholic churches are slimly attended. Recently a Roman Catholic paper in America

called attention to the small attendance upon Protestant churches. That paper might very properly call attention to the almost empty Catholic churches in France. The few who attend seldom if ever hear the gospel. They look upon and listen to a ritualistic service and hear instruction on ecclesiastical duties, but the message of salvation through Jesus Christ is rarely if ever proclaimed. The president of the Wesleyan Conference, in his address to the Conference, declared that of the 38,000,000 people in France, 35,000,000 have never heard the gospel appeal. The masses who have broken away from the Roman Catholic Church are destitute of vitalizing spiritual life. The Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," is loud, and should be met with a prompt response from American Protestantism.

Switzerland

The Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in Switzerland in 1856. At first and for many years our people struggled against the limitations and prejudices that always prevail in a country where a state Church exists. Gradually the limitations have been removed and the prejudices have given way until at present religious liberty and freedom of worship prevail. The Switzerland Conference met in the ancient city of Basel on the Rhine, May 18-23. The business was conducted in an orderly manner and with a dignity that commands respect. The social aspects of the Conference were quite unique. At ten A. M. tea was served in the lecture room; at 1 P. M., in a near-by dining hall, a generous lunch, which was interspersed with singing and brief addresses. Here the Conference choir was in evidence, led by a brother whose name is Lark—and the name fits the man. Sunday was the great day of the Conference. The church was not large enough to accommodate the people, and a public hall was secured that accommodates 2,000, and it was crowded to the limit. At the afternoon service a religious concert was given, the music being furnished by the Conference choir and by church choirs of Basel and surrounding towns. The music was interspersed with brief addresses and the whole service was deeply spiritual. Our Book Concern in Zurich is more prosperous than ever before and is widely disseminating sound, wholesome religious books and periodicals.

South Germany Conference

The Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in Germany in 1849 by L. S. Jacoby, D.D., who preached his first sermon in a small town about twenty miles from Bremen. This was the beginning of a work that has spread over Germany and Switzerland. In 1893 Germany was divided into two Conferences, designated as the North Germany Conference and the South Germany Conference. The session of the South Germany Conference was held May 25-29 in Freudenstadt in the Black Forest, a town of about 5,000 inhabitants, and noted as a health resort. The only medicine administered is pure, invigorating

Black Forest air, and the supply is inexhaustible. It is said to produce remarkable cures, particularly of nervous troubles. For this reason it is an ideal place for a Methodist Conference, as nervous troubles are likely to be aggravated when the appointments are under consideration. There are Conferences in America which would find such a resort desirable for their annual sessions.

North Germany Conference

The North Germany Conference met in Bremen June 1-6. Here the Methodist Episcopal Church was planted sixty-one years ago. On visiting the place one very naturally recalls the heroic services rendered by L. S. Jacoby, D.D., Rev. C. H. Doring, Rev. L. Nippert, Rev. E. Riemenschneider, and the Rev. H. Nuelsen, father of Bishop J. L. Nuelsen. The business programs of the two German Conferences are substantially the same. The Missionary Anniversary was held in the edifice in which Dr. Jacoby preached his first sermon in Bremen. The hall, which accommodates about 600 people, was quite full, and it was my privilege to deliver the address through the brain and tongue of Rev. Dr. Junker, the president of our Theological School at Frankfurt. All felt that they were on historic ground. The Methodist Episcopal Church is deeply and firmly rooted in Germany, and is destined to exert an ever-widening influence upon the moral and religious life of the Empire. Our Church has long since passed beyond the stage of experiment in Germany, and is now recognized as a permanent and potent force. There are two institutions, one in North Germany Conference and the other in the South Germany Conference, that deserve special mention—the Theological School at Frankfurt in the South and the Methodist Publishing House at Bremen in the North. The former educates and trains our ministers for Germany and Switzerland. But for this institution we would not have the intelligent, educated, and well-trained preachers who now serve our churches in these Conferences. The latter furnishes our preachers and people with religious literature, is growing in resources and usefulness, and it is an important source of revenue for the growing work in Germany.

Denmark

On my way from Germany to Denmark I spent a day and a night in Copenhagen, where our Church was established in 1857 by Rev. C. Willerup. In 1866, through the generosity of Harold Dollner, a Danish merchant of New York City, St. Mark's Church in Copenhagen was erected. This church is still the center of a large amount of religious activity. It is now what would be called in America a downtown church, and is doing an important work under the leadership of our energetic pastor, Rev. Anton Bast. During the winter of 1909 and 1910 13,788 meals were served and 4,259 homeless men found shelter at night. There was contributed for this

work in Copenhagen the sum of $5,700. The membership of the Church is about four hundred. It was my privilege to deliver a missionary address in this church on a week evening to a congregation estimated by the pastor at 400. The church edifice greatly needs extensive repairs and internal reconstruction, which will provide for apartments to be rented, and by so doing secure a greatly needed income. It is more than probable that a proposition for the needed improvements will be brought to the attention of this Board of Managers at an early day.

The Denmark Conference met in Vejle June 9-12. There are 23 ministerial members in the Conference, and it is expected that next year there will be at least 25, and if so an Annual Conference will be organized. The attendance of the people at the Conference sessions was very remarkable and on the occasions of anniversaries the house, which accommodates about 300 people, was altogether inadequate. Here, as in Switzerland and Germany, the growth of our membership is slow. Many people attend our services and take part in our work who have not severed their relation with the State Church. What is known as the Inner Mission has been brought into existence in all these countries to check the tendency of the members of the State Church to become members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The forms of worship and methods of work are substantially the same as in our churches.

Norway

The Norway Conference met in Haugesund June 29 to July 3. The town of Haugesund is located on the west coast of Norway and has a population of about 14,000. It can be reached overland only by coaches and by private conveyances, or by steamer on the North Sea. The Conference was an important event and made a profound impression. Our church, a frame structure which accommodates about 200, was crowded at every business session. The evening meetings were held in a hall which accommodates 600 and was far too small to hold all who desired to attend. The love feast, held on a week evening, in some respects was unlike anything I have ever seen. It began at 7 P. M. and continued until midnight. Some of the most prominent people in business and social life were present, among them the chief magistrate of the town. There were delivered during the evening eight addresses of the average length of about twenty minutes, and there were given many personal experiences of the saving power of the Gospel of Christ. There were songs by a trio, by a chorus choir of many voices, and by the whole congregation, and there was a spiritual fervor in it all that reminded me of scenes I have witnessed in days gone by in America—but too seldom seen in these later days. At about 10 o'clock a generous meal was served to all the people, after which the religious services were continued until the midnight hour.

The Sabbath was a great day. By permission of the King's Minister of Religion in Christiania, one of the State Churches, which accommodates 1,000 people, was placed at the disposal of the Conference for the morning service, the first instance of the kind in Norway. Bishop Burt preached to a congregation that packed the house, while many were unable to enter. In the evening he preached in the State Church Cathedral holding 3,000 people, and it was crowded. At 3 P. M. a mass temperance meeting was held in a public park, the estimated number in attendnce being 5,000, and it was my privilege to deliver an address. I have rarely seen more intense interest manifested on the temperance question. Norway is alive to the evils of the traffic in strong drink and is pushing toward the goal of prohibition.

Sweden

Methodism was introduced into Sweden in 1853. In 1865 Dr. Durbin visited the Mission and advised that classes be organized. The revival spirit prevailed and large numbers were converted. Bishop Kingsley, who started on his never completed world-round journey in 1868, visited Sweden on his way and constituted the work a regular Mission. Although as the years have gone by the government has become increasingly tolerant our progress has been handicapped in many ways. The State Church claims a sort of religious proprietorship over every Swedish subject. A young man or a young woman who is a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church cannot be a teacher in the public schools of the kingdom. There came to my knowledge the case of a young lady teacher in the public schools who believes that she is called to work in one of our missions in Africa, but she does not identify herself with our Church for the reason that by so doing she would at once lose her position as a teacher. She will remain a member of the State Church until she is ready to go to Africa, then resign her position, unite with us, and take her appointment as a missionary. Slowly the old prejudices are yielding, and the time will come when they will wholly pass away.

The Sweden Conference met at Orebro, July 6-11, a city of 36,000 inhabitants. Nine years ago, when I was a visitor, the Conference met in the same city. During these years a very great advance has been made. Then our people were worshiping in a very plain edifice quite inadequate to their needs and in an inconvenient location. Now they have an excellent building furnishing adequate facilities for church services and work, with additional space for business and residential apartments, centrally located. The space rented furnishes an income equal to the interest on the loan made to erect the building, with a considerable balance to apply annually on the principal. When the debt is extinguished the rental will be available for the erection of churches in the city and the surrounding communities. The auditorium of the new edifice will accommodate 700 or 800

people, and there are other rooms, including a commodious lecture-room. The ministerial membership of the Conference is 125, and is the strongest numerically of our European Conferences. During the session ten young men were admitted on trial, six of whom were regular graduates of our Theological School at Upsala, and all of whom had completed prescribed courses. The school at Upsala deserves special notice. It was commenced in Orebro in 1874, and later removed to its present location, where it has been for several years under the supervision of Rev. K. A. Jansson, upon whom the Ohio Wesleyan University, at its recent commencement, very worthily conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity. During the session the Conference discussed the question of division into two Annual Conferences, but by a large majority the proposition was defeated. And yet division cannot be very long deferred. The arguments in favor of the division are strong. First, the territory is too large to be covered by one Conference. Second, the ministerial and lay membership is large enough to make two numerically respectable bodies. Third, the expense of attending the annual sessions would be considerably decreased. Fourth, the annual sessions could be held in smaller towns than is now possible. Fifth, more men would be brought into leadership. Sixth, the territory would be more thoroughly cultivated.

Finland and Saint Petersburg

In the year 1802, at the close of a war between Russia and Sweden, Finland became a grand duchy under the suzerainty of the former. The relation of the two countries has always been unsatisfactory. Under the original agreement Finland was largely self-governing, having its own parliament and managing its own affairs. The upper branch of parliament is appointed by the Grand Duke (the Czar), while the lower house is elected by the people. Women have the same right of franchise as men, and are eligible to seats in the lower body. The recent action of the Douma greatly restricts the privileges of the Finnish parliament, and is the first important step toward depriving the people of a large measure of the self-government they have heretofore enjoyed. This action of Russia has increased the bitter feeling of the Finns, but they have no redress and must submit to the action taken by the Douma and approved by the Czar. The bitter feeling of the Finns and Swedes toward Russia appeared in the Conference when St. Petersburg was nominated as the seat of its session for 1911. After a somewhat intense debate, in which the action of the Douma was sharply criticised, the proposition was rejected by a large majority.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Finland in 1883, and in 1885 the work became a separate district of the Swedish Conference. Subsequently the work was separated from Sweden and became a separate mission. For several years Finland has been a

Mission Conference and next year will probably become an Annual Conference. The Mission Conference met in St. Michael, Finland, July 14-17. Our people have secured a valuable lot with a frontage of about 150 feet, and with a depth almost twice as great. The building, occupying the entire front line, has been reconstructed on the inside so as to provide a chapel that will accommodate 200 people and also rooms for school and residence purposes. The town has a population of about 4,000 and is typically Finnish. The reports of the Superintendent of the Mission, Rev. George E. Simons, D.D., and of the District Superintendents, showed encouraging progress on all lines. Five languages were used: Finnish, Swedish, English, German, and Russian. The minutes were recorded in Finnish and Swedish and were read and approved in both languages. Necessarily the transaction of business was greatly retarded by the use of these numerous languages. During the next quadrennium the Finnish and Swedish work should be organized into two separate Conferences covering the same territory.

Helsingfors

is the chief city of Finland, and has a population of 150,000, about equally divided between Finns and Swedes. The Swedes have an excellent new church property, splendidly located and free from debt. An adjoining property, upon which business shops are erected, carries a debt of about $14,000, which is annually reduced from rentals, and will in a few years be free from all incumbrance. Here the Finns have a fine location, with a neat and attractive place of worship accommodating 200 people. The building also provides residence for the pastor and rooms for social and religious uses. Unfortunately the debt is large and greatly burdens the congregation. I spent a Sabbath in Helsingfors, preaching in the morning to the Swedish congregation and in the evening to the Finnish congregation. A more intelligent and devout people could hardly be found anywhere. Finnish and Swedish preachers are wide awake, and if adequately supported for a few more years the work under their care will be largely self-supporting.

Russia

Next year, by authority of the General Conference, the work in Finland and Russia will be divided, the former becoming an Annual Conference and the latter a Mission. The vastness of the Russian empire is simply overwhelming. Her total area is 8,660,395 square miles. In Europe her area is about 2,000,000 square miles. Her total population is estimated at 136,000,000 to 160,000,000. Of these 15,000,000 are Mohammedans, 9,000,000 Roman Catholics (mostly Poles), 5,000,000 Jews, 6,000,000 Protestants, and the balance Orthodox Greek. About thirty nationalities are included. The State Church is Orthodox Greek, and until recently no one could renounce his creed

without incurring the penalty of imprisonment. While foreigners entering Russia were allowed to adhere to their respective religions, they did not dare to attempt a propaganda among Russians. By the decree of the Czar considerable liberty is now permitted, which accounts for the presence of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the empire. We have established our headquarters in St, Petersburg, and have a church organization with 130 members and probationers. On a week day evening I had the privilege of preaching to a congregation of about 150 people, and was interpreted into German and Russian. What is most needed here is a church building, providing for public worship, social services, and a parsonage, for which $100,000 is needed. In all of Europe there is no place where such a property is so greatly needed. The hall we now occupy accommodates only about 200, and is wholly inadequate. Here is an opportunity for some wealthy Methodist to erect a memorial which will at once commemorate some worthy name and supply a need, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. Rev. George E. Simons, D.D., is in charge of our work and has already proved himself to be a wise and efficient leader. There are vast numbers of people, now that a large degree of religious liberty is allowed, who are easily approachable and who will promptly respond to evangelical leadership. There is probably no country nominally Christian where there are such possibilities for an aggressive type of Protestantism as Russia.

Finance

Algiers has no debts, for the reason that we own no property.

In Europe property values and debts are approximately stated in the following table:

	Value of Property.	Debt on Real Estate.
North Germany	$1,140,783	$571,519
South Germany	985,759	367,849
Switzerland	766,269	289,947
Norway	277,375	85,094
Sweden	840,197	352,199
Denmark	773,561	119,963
Finland	148,261	60,003
Bulgaria	43,730	.....
Italy	405,000	109,300
Total	$4,680,935	$1,955,874

This indebtedness seems at first sight startling, if not appalling. But it is not as bad as it seems. By inquiry I found that the two Conferences in Germany and the one in Switzerland are now following a policy which promises to extinguish their debts made in recent years. They have been erecting buildings which provide church accommodations, also business rooms and residential apartments that are

rented and which provide for interest on the money they have borrowed; also for an annual reduction of the indebtedness. For five years they have made no property debts that they will not ultimately pay from their own resources. The rate of interest is reasonable and the payment of loans certain. The whole plan is based upon business principles that appear to be safe and sound. However, the two Conferences in Germany and the Switzerland Conference are carrying burdens that grew out of the earlier financial policy that are very embarrassing and greatly handicap their progress. The debts for which there is no provision, for either interest or principal, aggregate approximately $130,000, viz., North Germany, $50,000; South Germany, $50,000; Switzerland, $30,000. The debts were created through a series of years by the erection of churches and parsonages without any provision for payment except from the voluntary gifts of the people and the grants made by our General Committee. For many years the General Committee made grants to apply on property debts, conditioned upon the raising of an equal sum by the Conferences. But the policy did not stop the growth of their debts, for the reason that new debts were annually made which were larger than the sums paid by the people and appropriations made by the General Committee. When I visited those Conferences nine years ago I warned them against that policy, a warning they heeded, and consequently in recent years they have been following the plan above described.

At each of the ten Conferences in Europe, I called special attention to their financial condition and stated that they could not presumably expect an increase in the annual appropriations, and that in the near future there would probably be a decrease. I urged them to apply something annually from the regular appropriations on their debts and by so much require the churches to furnish more for the support of their pastors. To this they demurred, saying that the support of their preachers is inadequate now. They claimed that these old debts were made upon the advice of bishops who presided over their Conferences and they were assured that the mother church would furnish the money needed. Having acted upon this advice they think that their claim for further aid is well founded. My judgment is that there should be a sum set apart annually to be applied to the payment of the principal of these debts, they to be required to pay the interest and in addition a sum equal to the appropriation on the principal. Unless some such policy is adopted I do not see how these debts can be paid. What I have said about the debts in Germany and Switzerland will apply with slight modifications to the Scandinavian and Finland Conferences.

Bulgaria, the weakest aud smallest Conference in the list, reports no property debt.

Italy is in a class by itself and requires separate treatment. Here there is but comparatively little income from rentals; consequently

principal, interest, taxes, and upkeep must be largely provided from missionary funds, including special gifts. The debts are as follows:

Abanell Chapel	$1,841
Lausanne Property	16,000
Loan from Annuity Fund	1,500
Montaldo Chapel and Parsonage	2,133
Perano Chapel and Parsonage	243
Perugio Chapel and Parsonage	250
Rome Building	76,545
San Marzano Chapel and Parsonage	7,227
Turin Building—repairs, etc	1,742
Various property debts	5,700
Advances made by Board Jan., 1910-May, 1910	20,380
Total	$133,561

Dr. N. Walling Clark furnishes the following statement concerning the Free Church property turned over to us a few years ago:—

"The Italian Evangelical Church, or, as it is commonly called, the Free Church in Italy, is regularly incorporated under Italian laws.

"As a corporation administering trust funds for benevolent and religious purposes, the Free Church Society cannot dispose of any of its property without the consent of the Minister of Grace and Justice.

"When it was agreed, in December, 1904, that there should be a union of the Free Churches with the two branches of Methodism in Italy, a formal request was made to the Minister of Grace and Justice for permission to transfer certain properties to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. A favorable response to this request was not received until late in the year 1906, and on December 8th of that year a deed of transfer was duly signed by the authorized representatives of the Free Church corporation and by the Rev. William Burgess, representing the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and the Rev. Walling Clark, representing the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

By this deed of transfer the Board of Foreign Missions received properties in the following cities and towns, having a valuation which is estimated according to the figures quoted in the list:

City or Town.	Valuation.
1. Bassignana	$5,000
2. Leghorn	9,000
3. Pisa	6,000
4. Pontasserchio	3,000
5. Udine	8,000
6. Venice, St. Mark's	16,000
7. " St. Margaret's	11,000
Total estimated value	$58,000

The St. Margaret's property in Venice has been sold by order of the Board for the amount above named, and of the proceeds about $8,600 used for the purchase of ground for the erection of a church

building in Milan. The St. Mark's property in Venice is the only one of those received from the Free Church which had any incumbrance upon it. This building and the church building in Milan, which went to the Wesleyan Church, are together mortgaged for *L*50,000 ($10,000). It is agreed that this mortgage shall be paid from the proceeds of the sale or expropriation of the Ponte St. Angelo property in Rome, which, together with the Florence property, is still held by the Free Church corporation.

In addition to the mortgage just mentioned, the Free Church corporation has obligations amounting to about *L*150,000 ($30,000). These debts, like the Milan-Venice mortgage, will be paid when the Rome property is sold. This property is believed to be worth *L*300,000 ($60,000), so that there should be a balance of about $20,000, after all the obligations of the Free Church corporation are satisfied. Whatever balance remains will be equally divided between the two Methodist Missionary Societies.

It has not yet been possible to dispose of the Free Church property in Rome because of the long delay in securing, first, the consent of the Minister of Grace and Justice to the transfer of the properties; second, the Royal Decree authorizing the two Foreign Missionary Societies to *accept* these properties, such a decree being absolutely necessary to a clear title; and, third, a final and definite answer from the Municipality of Rome concerning the possible expropriation of the St. Angelo property. Each of these processes has required an *incredible* amount of *persistent and patient* work on the part of the representatives of the two Methodist Societies. At one time the Royal Decree was *refused* by the action of the Council of State, and it was only by securing the aid of one of the most powerful deputies in Parliament, that we finally obtained from the Minister a reversal of the decision of the Supreme Council.

It has not yet been possible to obtain a definite answer concerning the expropriation of the Rome property. The city authorities appear to delay the matter because of uncertainty as to the rearrangement of certain streets which pass the property on three sides. We are making every effort to have the question settled so that we may realize on the property, pay the debts, and close up the affairs of the Free Church.

It will be readily understood that in adjusting the many questions, legal and otherwise, which have arisen during these years, it has been necessary to incur considerable expense. The total amount of this is about *L*58,000, of which about *L*45,000 is due to our bankers in Rome. Whenever it is desired, a detailed statement of these expenses can be given. This debt will be paid from the funds received in the final settlement of the Free Church corporation.

In every Conference I urged the absolute importance of larger self-support. I reminded them of the generous sums that have been gladly sent for the support of their work for many years—more than

sixty years in Germany and Switzerland, and fifty-seven years in Scandinavia. I called their attention to the following table:

APPROPRIATIONS TO EUROPEAN CONFERENCES FROM THE BEGINNING

Germany and Switzerland	$1,173,537
North Germany	259,004
South Germany	269,215
Scandinavia	236,369
Denmark and Norway	285,697
Norway	515,727
Denmark	401,014
Sweden	855,893
Switzerland	206,571
Finland and St. Petersburg	110,632
Bulgaria	552,260
Italy	1,460,663
France	11,654
	$6,438,236

I urged that after so many years and the reception of so large sums by the Conferences respectively the time has come when they should think of themselves more as givers and less as receivers; that they have too long regarded themselves as objects of benevolent gifts rather than makers of gifts; that the time has come when they should think of themselves as a part of the great Methodist Episcopal army battling for the conquest of the pagan and Mohammedan world. I urged them to summon their laymen to the battle line. Our laymen in all our European Conferences have been kept in the background while the preachers have been in the foreground. Our lay brother, Ernest Gideon Bek, of the South Germany Conference, is sounding a note loud and clear on this question, and a new era of aggressiveness seems about to dawn. I urged further that a Laymen's Movement, patterned somewhat after the Movement in America, should be inaugurated, and the suggestion met with hearty approval. The Methodist Brotherhood in America should reach out a helping hand to their brothers across the Atlantic.

What is the result of our more than a half-century in Europe? Well, approximately as follows:

Germany, two Conferences:	
Ministers	168
Members and probationers	24,089
Sunday school scholars and teachers	26,423
Switzerland:	
Ministers	53
Members and probationers	9,419
Sunday school scholars and teachers	22,397
Sweden:	
Ministers	125
Members and probationers	17,582
Sunday school scholars and teachers	19,704

Norway:	
Ministers	50
Members and probationers	6,221
Sunday school scholars and teachers	7,600
Denmark:	
Ministers	23
Members and probationers	3,699
Sunday school scholars and teachers	4,425
Bulgaria:	
Ministers	17
Members and probationers	662
Sunday school scholars and teachers	568
Italy:	
Ministers	43
Members and probationers	4,036
Sunday school scholars and teachers	1,922
Finland and St. Petersburg:	
Ministers	18
Members and probationers	1,339
Sunday school scholars and teachers	2,409
Totals:	
Ministers	499
Members and probationers	67,047
Sunday school scholars and teachers	85,449
Value of property	$4,680,935
Indebtedness	1,955,874
Equity	$2,725,061

It may be said that the growth of our Church in Europe has been slow, but in view of all the difficulties encountered it is a wonder that our success has been so great. The statistics do not tell the whole story by any means. The State Churches of Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia have been both liberalized and spiritualized by our presence. We are welcomed now where in the earlier days our people were sorely persecuted and our ministers mobbed and imprisoned. Besides, our German, Scandinavian, and Italian Churches in America are constantly reinforced by Methodist emigrants from those countries. If all people who have been converted in our churches were enrolled upon our records our numbers would be double if not treble what they are.

I cannot close this report without paying a deserved tribute to

Bishop William Burt

who has now completed the seventh round of our ten European Conferences. On the round completed July 17th it was my privilege to attend each Conference and to enjoy his confidence and fellowship, and I take special pleasure in testifying to the painstaking care and

efficiency with which his responsible and difficult duties have been performed. He knows the work in all its details and he knows the men one by one. I often wondered how he has made himself familiar with the names of the preachers. Though many of the names are unfamiliar to American ears and difficult to pronounce by an American tongue, he never once failed to recognize any brother by name who addressed him as chairman. To say that he is popular among preachers and people is only to pay a richly deserved compliment to a faithful bishop and brother beloved.

Personal

I sailed from New York under the authorization of this Board March 16th and returned August 7th, having been absent four months and twenty days. During that time I attended twelve Conferences, beginning with Algiers in North Africa, and ending with Saint Michaels in Finland, including the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. I have traveled about 20,000 miles, delivered forty-nine sermons and addresses, and looked after a great many business interests. I have not failed to meet every engagement, and have not been ill a moment except when having a brief tussle with Neptune on the North Sea, and then "won out." Some one is reported to have said that the Corresponding Secretary has been enjoying a vacation in Europe. If this has been a vacation what would occupation have been? Everywhere I received the most cordial welcome from preachers and people, which was ample compensation for the fatigue of travel endured and the labor performed.